

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP CARTER, JIMMY
SUBJ: PEREZ PRESS CONFERENCE ON CARTER VISIT

TWO DAYS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED ARRIVAL OF PRESIDENT
JIMMY CARTER, VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ
EXPRESSED FEARS ABOUT POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE PANAMA
CANAL TREATIES AMENDMENTS, AND DECLARED HIS STRONG SUPPORT
FOR US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES.

SPEAKING AT 90-MINUTE EASTER SUNDAY MORNING PRESS
CONFERENCE AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE REQUESTED BY THE
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS ASSOCIATION, PEREZ REVIEWED A
BROAD RANGE OF BILATERAL REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES
RELATED TO THE MARCH 28-29 VISIT OF PRESIDENT CARTER.
THE 8AM PRESS CONFERENCE WAS ATTENDED BY SOME
50 NEWSMEN INCLUDING RESIDENT CORRESPONDENTS AND
THOSE VISITING FROM THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

ASKED ABOUT SENATE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
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PANAMA CANAL TREATIES, PEREZ SAID LATIN AMERICAN
LEADERS FEEL "LIKE THE ALLIES BEFORE THE INVASION
OF NORMANDY. WE ARE VERY FRIGHTENED." HE ADDED,
HOWEVER, THAT THE AMENDMENTS ARE PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC
PROCESSES THAT THE US AND VENEZUELA BOTH RESPECT AND
THAT IN THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS " WE ARE BUILDING THE
FOUNDATION OF FIRM, FAIR AND JUST FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN

THE US AND LATIN AMERICA."

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, HE CONTINUED, HAD TO COPE WITH ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS IN THE HEMISPHERE, ONE WHOSE RESOLUTION " HAS CARRIED US TO A NEW UNDERSTANDING THAT GOES BEYOND THE RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY ITSELF. THIS IS THE RATIFICATION OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND LATIN AMERICA BECAUSE IN THE LONG RUN THIS IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF ALL MANKIND."

PEREZ POINTED OUT THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE HEMISPHERIC CHIEFS OF STATE ATTENDING THE TREATY SIGNING IN SEPTEMBER WERE NOT DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED. "BUT WHERE IN LATIN AMERICA," HE ASKED THE REPORTERS, "DID THERE OCCUR ANY PROTESTS OVER THIS SIGNING? THIS IS WHAT THE US PRESS SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF AND THAT BEYOND THE PRESENCE OF GOVT REPRESENTATIVES, THERE WAS THE PRESENCE OF THE SOLIDARITY OF ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE HEMISPHERE. NOT SINCE THE US ENTERED WORLD WAR II HAS THERE BEEN IN THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENT SUCH FRANK, HEARTY ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT FOR THE US.

ON THE PRACTICAL RESULTS OF US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES, PRESIDENT PEREZ SAID THAT THEY HAVE AN ETHICAL SIGNIFICANCE FAR BEYOND THEIR PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS. UNCLASSIFIED

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HE MAINTAINED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT IMMEDIATE RESULTS OR THAT THE US WOULD INTERVENE DIRECTLY IN PURSUIT OF ITS POLICIES. "ONE OF MOST TRANSCENDENTAL POLITICAL EVENTS OF THE DAY," HE WENT ON, "WAS THE PROCLAMATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE US. BECAUSE THEY HAVE GIVEN A NEW DIMENSION TO THE US."

AS FOR PRACTICAL EFFECTS, HE SAID, THERE ARE THE MANY DECLARATIONS THAT ARE BEING HEARD WITH GREATER FREQUENCY IN THE SENSE THAT THE MILITARY GOVTS IN POWER IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES ARE TRANSITORY AND THAT THEY ARE RETURNING TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE.

"IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT NICARAGUA, HE SAID THAT THE SITUATION THERE "PUTS TO A TEST WHAT THE U AND VENEZUELA HAVE SAID ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS". PEREZ MAINTAINED THAT WHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO INTERVENTION THERE, HUMAN RIGHTS " ARE A CATEGORY OF RIGHTS WHICH ARE SUPRANATIONAL AND MUST GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT " I THINK WE HAVE TO GO BEYOND WORDS

TO SPECIFIC SUPRANATIONAL MEASURES TO COUNTER ACTIONS
WHICH OFFEND HUMAN DIGNITY AND FREEDOM".

TURNING TO OIL AND ENERGY, THE VENEZUELAN CHIEF
EXECUTIVE SAID THAT SINCE HIS JUNE 28 MEETING WITH
PRESIDENT CARTER IN WASHINGTON THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE
REPEATEDLY THEIR PLEDGE REGULARLY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS,
CITING AS AN EXAMPLE A RECENT MEETING BETWEEN THE
VENEZUELAN MINISTER OF MINES AND SECRETARY SCHLESINGER.

"THE US, SAID PEREZ, HAS BEEN OUR
MOST IMPORTANT OIL CUSTOMER FOR 50 YEARS AND WILL
CONTINUE TO BE SO. I SHARE THE POSITION EXPRESSED BY
PRESIDENT CARTER IN HIS ENERGY BILL PRESENTED TO THE
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US CONGRESS. THERE IS PRESENTLY NO SUBSTITUTE FOR
OIL IN SIGHT, AND WE MUST END THE WASTE OF HYDROCARBONS."

PEREZ INDICATED HE HAD PUBLICLY PRAISED PRESIDENT
CARTER'S ENERGY POLICIES, SAYING THAT THEY WERE "THE
FIRST TIME A PRESIDENT HAS RECOGNIZED THE VULNERABILITY
OF A COUNTRY" TO ENERGY LIMITS AND PARTICULARLY TO
PROBLEMS RELATED TO OIL RESOURCES.

ASKED ABOUT SPECIFIC AREAS OF US-VENEZUELAN
DISAGREEMENT IN NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES, THE VENEZUELAN
PRESIDENT SAID THAT SUCH DISAGREEMENTS GO BEYOND OIL

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PRICES AND ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH THE GENERAL ECONOMIC IMBALANCE BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND THIRD WORLD NATIONS. VENEZUELA AND THE OPEC COUNTRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, USE OIL PRICES AS AN INSTRUMENT TO BRING ABOUT GREATER ECONOMIC BALANCE AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE. "OIL PRICES CAN REMAIN THE SAME OR EVEN DECLINE AS LONG AS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES' PRODUCTS ARE SOLD AT JUST PRICES AND WE HAVE FAIR TREATMENT IN THE SALE OF OUR RAW MATERIALS."

PEREZ NOTED WITH PLEASURE THE AGREEMENT REACHED RECENTLY AT THE NORTH-SOUTH MEETING IN PARIS ON COMMODITIES AND A RECOGNITION BY THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE GRAVITY OF THE DEBT OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA SAID THAT MORE IMPORTANT THAN ECONOMIC ISSUES WHICH CONTINUALLY SURFACE IS THE DEEP MORAL CRISIS OF THE WORLD. "WE SEE THAT WHILE INTENTIONS APPEAR TO GO IN ONE DIRECTION, ACTIONS GO IN ANOTHER DIRECTION."

PEREZ HELD THAT INTERNATIONAL INJUSTICE HAS GROWN, THAT THERE IS AN "IMMENSE INEQUALITY BETWEEN TWO THIRDS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF HUMANITY WHO ARE EXPLOITED BY THE FEW". HE ASKED FOR JUST PRICES FOR RAW MATERIALS EXPORTED BY DEVELOPING NATIONS AND FOR THE MANUFACTURED GOODS THEY IMPORT.

AS FOR DIRECT RESULTS OF THE CARTER VISIT, PEREZ SAID "THAT IS THE SIXTY-FOUR THOUSAND DOLLAR QUESTION." HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT THE IMPORTANT THING IS THE SINCERE CONCERN AND THE SPECIFIC DESIRE OF THE US AND VENEZUELA TO GO BEYOND MORE PROTOCOLARY FORMALITIES AND WORK TOWARD EFFECTIVE COOPERATION. "I AM SURE I WILL FIND PRESIDENT CARTER TO BE RECEPTIVE TO THIS," HE SAID.

HE BELIEVES THE US MUST BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AS A KEY TO STRENGTHENING INTERNAL MARKETS, IMPROVING THE GENERAL WELFARE, PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT AND CREATING A BETTER MARKET FOR US GOODS.

LATIN AMERICA, WHICH HAS AN UNFAVORABLE BALANCE

OF TRADE WITH THE US HAS NOT CONTRIBUTED TO BUT
HAS RATHER LESSENERED THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES
EXPERIENCED BY THE US IN RECENT YEARS, ACCORDING TO
PEREZ. CITING THAT MEXICO IS THE US FIFTH
LARGEST TRADING PARTNER AND THAT VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL
OCCUPY SEVENTH AND TWELTH PLACES RESPECTIVELY, PEREZ
MAINTAINED THAT US-LATIN AMERICAN TRADE RELATIONS
WERE MORE IMPORTANT TO THE US THAN THOSE
WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET NATIONS.

THE VENEZUELAN CHIEF OF STATE SAID HE CONSIDERS
THE CARIBBEAN TO BE "COMPLETELY INTEGRATED INTO
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LATIN AMERICA." HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESENT
CARTER AND OTHER HEMISPHERE LEADERS HAVE INCREASINGLY
DEALT WITH THE CARIBBEAN, HE CONTINUED. "CONTINENTAL
NATIONS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AIDING THE CARIBBEAN
POLITICALLY, SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY," HE MAINTAINED.
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